

North Dakota Parks & Recreation Department

NEWS RELEASE

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For more information, contact Fort Abraham Lincoln State Park at 701-667-6340

Haunted Fort to terrorize Bismarck-Mandan for another year

North Dakota Parks and Recreation proudly announces Haunted Fort is ready to open its doors at Fort Abraham Lincoln State Park (FALSP) for another terrifying season beginning this Friday, Oct. 11. Once again, the historic buildings at Fort Abraham Lincoln have been transformed into nightmarish scenes challenging the bravery of anyone passing through their gates. Now in its 12th year, Haunted Fort is one of the largest haunted attractions in North Dakota and surrounding region. It is also the largest event hosted by the North Dakota State Parks' system.

Haunted Fort is a supporting event for the interpretive programs at FALSP. Revenues help maintain the buildings and the state's interpretive program. The event started in 2002 when staff decided to take advantage of the haunted lore surrounding Fort Abraham Lincoln, according to Haunted Fort creative director Matt Schanandore.

"Since rebuilding the Custer House in 1989, people have said it's haunted," Schanandore said. "And it's not just present-day paranormal enthusiasts interested in ghosts at Fort Lincoln, everyone likes a good horror story."

According to Schanandore, back in 1878, a medium traveled out to Fort Abraham Lincoln with a reporter from the Bismarck Tribune to make contact with spirits haunting the grounds. "That's just part of the underlying reason Haunted Fort works so well," he says. "With the eerie, empty buildings stuck in the old era of the fort, legends and mysteries that surround the battle of the Little Big Horn, and a heightened awareness of the paranormal thanks to Hollywood, Fort Lincoln has the perfect atmosphere for a top notch haunted attraction and we sort of feed off that."

The other reason for the event's success is the creative team planning the event. Every year, the scenarios, settings and props change so people aren't seeing the same thing year after year. Changing things is the best way to make sure people come back again and again.

"We're constantly pushing things to the next level from one year to the next because people get tired of seeing the same things over and over," Schanandore says. "Instead, every year we offer new sets and props that propel Haunted Fort beyond anything else you'll find around here."

Because of the intense nature of Haunted Fort the event is recommended for ages 13 and up. "We gear the event toward a PG-13 audience, but it's up to parents if they want to bring their kids out here," he says.

People brave enough to face the attraction, get their chance starting this Friday and continuing every Friday and Saturday for the rest of October. In addition, Haunted Fort will offer special nights Thursday, Oct. 17 (Student Night) and Thursday, Oct. 31. The ticket office opens at 7 p.m. each night. Haunted Fort

runs from 7:30 p.m. to 10 p.m. on Thursday Oct. 17, and 7:30 p.m. to 11 p.m. on all other days. Haunted Fort will be open to Saturday Nov. 2 Admission for Haunted Fort is \$12.

For the complete list of dates and times, visit www.hauntedfort.com. You can also like Haunted Fort on Facebook (www.facebook.com/HauntedFort). For media questions and interviews please contact Matt Schanandore via cell at 701-426-7528.